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REMARKS

Claims 1-50 are pending in the present application. Reconsideration is respectfully requested for the following reasons.

Claims 1-3, 5-10, 13, 14, 16-21, 24, 25, 27-32, 34, 36 and 38 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,172,311 to Becker in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,387,986 to Evans. The requirements for making a prima facie case of obviousness are described in MPEP §2143 as follows:

In order to establish a prima facie case of obviousness, three criteria must be met. M.P.E.P. § 706.02(j). Firstly, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. *In re Fine*, 5 U.S.P.Q.2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988). Secondly, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. *In re Merck & Co., Inc.*, 231 U.S.P.Q. 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986). Thirdly, the prior art reference (or references) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. *In re Royka*, 180 U.S.P.Q. 580 (C.C.P.A. 1974).

The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, and not based on applicant's disclosure. *In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991).

The mere fact that references can be combined or modified does not render the resultant combination obvious unless the prior art also suggests the desirability of the combination. *In re Mills*, 916 F.2d 680, 16 USPQ2d 1430 (Fed. Cir. 1990).

In proceedings before the Patent and Trademark Office, the Examiner bears the burden of establishing a prima facie case of obviousness based upon the prior art. *In re Fritch*, 23 USPQ 2d 1780, 1783 (Fed. Cir. 1992); M.P.E.P. §2142. Applicants respectfully assert that the Examiner has not yet met the Examiner's burden of establishing a prima facie case of obviousness with respect to the rejected claims. Consequently, the Examiner's rejection of the subject claims is inappropriate, and should be withdrawn.

Claim 1 defines a sign system assembly including, among other things, a frame having a face and a template adapted to fit against the face in an accurate position thereon. The

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template has an opening therethrough and a scale thereon. At least one alphanumeric locator is configured to fit within the opening of the template and be properly located in position by aligning a portion of the at least one alphanumeric locator with the scale of the template. The at least one alphanumeric locator has an aperture therethrough. The sign system assembly also includes an alphanumeric symbol for each alphanumeric locator, each alphanumeric symbol having an adhesive backing. Each aperture has a perimeter corresponding to a periphery of at least one alphanumeric symbol and wherein the alphanumeric symbol can be accurately positioned on the face of the frame by inserting the alphanumeric symbol through the aperture having the corresponding perimeter and adhering the alphanumeric symbol to the face of the frame.

The prior art of record does not disclose or suggest the above noted features of claim 1. In regard to the first criterion of obviousness, there is no suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to combine the reference teachings. The present Office Action has combined the Becker '331 patent with the Evans '986 patent to reject the present claims. The Becker '331 patent is drawn to a display apparatus for personalizing a vehicle to allow an owner of the vehicle to place words on the vehicle. The Evans '986 patent is drawn to a device for accurately positioning insignia on an Army officer's blouse. According to the Office Action, the Becker '331 patent includes all of the features of claim 1 except for a template having a scale thereon. Furthermore, according to the Office Action, the Evans '986 patent includes a template 1 having a scale 2, 5. Moreover, according to the Office Action:

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the sign system assembly of Becker to include a scale thereon, as taught by Evans, so that the alphanumeric locators could be placed at spaced intervals along the template and so that the use would be able to measure the distance between each of the alphanumeric locators, between the edges of the template and the alphanumeric locators, and between the center of the template and the alphanumeric locators.

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However, there is no suggestion or motivation for adding the graduations 2 or 5 of the Evans '986 patent to the Becker '331 patent. First, the Evans '986 patent discloses the function of the graduations 2. According to the Evans '986 patent:

The graduations 2 at the upper edge of the device constitute a rule which may be used to locate the insignia of rank, arm or service on the head gear, the shirt collar or the shoulder loop on the shirt, blouse or overcoat of an Army officer's uniform.

Page 2, column 1, lines 27-32. The graduations 5 are used for the same reasons.

Accordingly, the Evans '986 patent only includes graduations for properly aligning the device on a head gear, shirt collar or shoulder loop on a shirt, blouse or overcoat of an Army officer's uniform. However, since the Becker '331 patent does not include any such uniform, there is no reason for adding the graduations 2 or 5 to the Becker '331 patent as set forth in the Office Action. Second, according to the Office Action, the Becker '331 patent includes a template 66 in Fig. 5a. As shown in Fig. 5a, the openings 68 can only fit one letter therein, and the letters are not allowed to move within the openings 68 because of the relative size between the two. Accordingly, since a distance between each of the guides 70 are fixed, there is no reason for measuring the distance between the guides 70, between edges of the template body 66 and the guides 70 or between a center of the template 66 and the guides 70. All of these items have discrete and set positions such that any guide thereon would not serve any purpose. Finally, as discussed above, the teaching or suggestion to make a claimed combination must be found in the prior art, not in Applicant's disclosure, and Applicants submit that the motivation set forth in the Office Action is only taken from Applicant's disclosure. Accordingly, claim 1 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 2-12, 39 and 40 depend from claim 1, and since claim 1 defines unobvious patentable subject matter as discussed above, claims 2-12, 39 and 40 define patentable subject matter. Furthermore, in regard to claim 10, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest a panel comprising an outer margin, a template and a guide, wherein the template is removably connected to the outer margin and the guide is removably connected to the template.

According to the Office Action, the Becker '331 patent includes a panel 76 including an outer

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margin, a template and a guide. However, the element 76 of the Becker '331 patent is an overlay which does not include the template body 66. Furthermore, the overlay 76 is not removably connected to the template body 66. Finally, a guide has not been identified in the Office Action and Applicant submits that such a guide is not included in the Becker '331 patent. Notably, Fig. 5a of the Becker '331 patent includes an overlay 76, a template body 66, a guide 70 and a letter. All of these elements have been previously defined in the Office Action as being elements other than the guide of claim 10. Accordingly, even if it were proper to combine the Becker '331 patent with the Evans '986 patent, any such combination would not include all of the features of claim 10. Accordingly, claims 2-12, 39 and 40 are in condition for allowance.

Claim 13 defines a sign making system assembly for a frame having a face including, among other things, a template adapted to fit against the face in an accurate position thereon, the template having an opening therethrough and a scale thereon. At least one alphanumeric locator is configured to fit within the opening of the template and be properly located in position by aligning a portion of the at least one alphanumeric locator with the scale of the template, the at least one alphanumeric locator having an aperture therethrough. The sign making system assembly also includes an alphanumeric symbol for each alphanumeric locator, each alphanumeric symbol having an adhesive backing. Each aperture has a perimeter corresponding to a periphery of at least one alphanumeric symbol, wherein the alphanumeric symbol can be accurately positioned on the face of the frame by inserting the alphanumeric symbol through the aperture having the corresponding perimeter and connecting the alphanumeric symbol to the face of the frame.

The prior art of record does not disclose or suggest the above noted features of claim 13. Specifically, in regard to the first criterion of obviousness, there is no suggestion or motivation for combining the Becker '331 patent with the Evans '986 patent as discussed above with regard to claim 1. Accordingly, claim 13 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 14-23, 41 and 42 depend from claim 1, and since claim 1 defines unobvious patentable subject matter as discussed above, claims 14-23, 41 and 42 define patentable subject matter. Furthermore, in regard to claim 21, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest

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a panel comprising an outer margin, a template and a guide, wherein the template is removably connected to the outer margin and the guide is removably connected to the template as discussed above in regard to claim 10. Accordingly, claims 14-23, 41 and 42 are in condition for allowance.

Claim 24 defines a sign making system assembly for placing alphanumeric symbols on a frame having a face including, among other things, a template adapted to fit against the face of the frame in an accurate position thereon, the template having an opening therethrough and a scale thereon. At least one alphanumeric locator is configured to fit within the opening of the template and be properly located in position by aligning a portion of the at least one alphanumeric locator with the scale of the template, the at least one alphanumeric locator having an aperture therethrough. Each aperture has a perimeter configured to correspond to a periphery of at least one alphanumeric symbol, wherein the alphanumeric symbol can be accurately positioned on the face of the frame by inserting the alphanumeric symbol through the aperture having the corresponding perimeter and connecting the alphanumeric symbol to the face of the frame.

The prior art of record does not disclose or suggest the above noted features of claim 24. Specifically, in regard to the first criterion of obviousness, there is no suggestion or motivation for combining the Becker '331 patent with the Evans '986 patent as discussed above with regard to claim 1. Accordingly, claim 24 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 25-33, 43 and 44 depend from claim 24, and since claim 24 defines unobvious patentable subject matter as discussed above, claims 25-33, 43 and 44 define patentable subject matter. Furthermore, in regard to claim 32, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest a panel comprising an outer margin, a template and a guide, wherein the template is removably connected to the outer margin and the guide is removably connected to the template as discussed above in regard to claim 10. Accordingly, claims 25-33, 43 and 44 are in condition for allowance.

Claim 34 defines a method of accurately making a sign including, among other things, providing a frame having a face, providing a template with a scale thereon, providing an opening through the template, placing the template in position against the face of the frame,

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providing at least one alphanumeric locator, the at least one alphanumeric locator having an aperture therethrough, locating the at least one alphanumeric locator within the opening of the template and aligning a portion of the at least one alphanumeric locator with the scale of the template to accurately position the at least one alphanumeric locator. The method also includes providing an alphanumeric symbol for each alphanumeric locator, each alphanumeric symbol having a periphery corresponding to a perimeter of the aperture of one of the at least one alphanumeric locator, inserting the alphanumeric symbol through the aperture in one of the at least one alphanumeric locator, and connecting each alphanumeric symbol to the face of the frame.

The prior art of record does not disclose or suggest the above noted features of claim 34. Specifically, in regard to the first criterion of obviousness, there is no suggestion or motivation for combining the Becker '331 patent with the Evans '986 patent as discussed above with regard to claim 1. Furthermore, according to the Office Action, the Becker '331 patent includes aligning a portion of the at least one alphanumeric locator with the scale of the template to accurately position the at least one alphanumeric locator. However, the Office Action goes on to state that the Becker '331 patent does not include a template having a scale. Accordingly, the Becker '331 patent cannot have the aligning element of this method claim as discussed above such that the combination set forth in the Office Action would not include all of the features of claim 34. Accordingly, claim 34 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 35, 45 and 46 depend from claim 34, and since claim 34 defines unobvious patentable subject matter as discussed above, claims 35, 45 and 46 define patentable subject matter. Accordingly, claims 35, 45 and 46 are in condition for allowance.

Claim 36 defines a method of accurately making a sign with a frame having a face, the method comprising providing a template with a scale thereon, providing an opening through the template, placing the template in position against the face of the frame, and providing at least one alphanumeric locator. The at least one alphanumeric locator has an aperture therethrough. The method also includes locating the at least one alphanumeric locator within the opening of the template and aligning a portion of the at least one alphanumeric locator with the scale of the template to accurately position the at least one alphanumeric locator and

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providing an alphanumeric symbol for each alphanumeric locator. Each alphanumeric symbol has a periphery corresponding to a perimeter of the aperture of one of the at least one alphanumeric locator. The method also includes inserting the alphanumeric symbol through the aperture in one of the at least one alphanumeric locator, and connecting each alphanumeric symbol to the face of the frame.

The prior art of record does not disclose or suggest the above noted features of claim 36. Specifically, in regard to the first criterion of obviousness, there is no suggestion or motivation for combining the Becker '331 patent with the Evans '986 patent as discussed above with regard to claim 1. Furthermore, according to the Office Action, the Becker '331 patent includes aligning a portion of the at least one alphanumeric locator with the scale of the template to accurately position the at least one alphanumeric locator. However, the Office Action goes on to state that the Becker '331 patent does not include a template having a scale. Accordingly, the Becker '331 patent cannot have the aligning element of this method claim as discussed above such that the combination set forth in the Office Action would not include all of the features of claim 36. Accordingly, claim 36 is in condition for allowance.

Claim 38 defines a method of accurately aligning at least one alphanumeric symbol on a face of a frame to make a sign, the method comprising providing a template with a scale thereon, providing an opening through the template, placing the template in position against the face of the frame. The method also includes providing at least one alphanumeric locator, the at least one alphanumeric locator having an aperture therethrough, locating the at least one alphanumeric locator within the opening of the template and aligning a portion of the at least one alphanumeric locator with the scale of the template to accurately position the at least one alphanumeric locator, providing each aperture with a perimeter corresponding to a periphery of at least one alphanumeric symbol, inserting the alphanumeric symbol through the aperture in one of the at least one alphanumeric locator, and connecting the at least one alphanumeric symbol to the face of the frame.

The prior art of record does not disclose or suggest the above noted features of claim 38. Specifically, in regard to the first criterion of obviousness, there is no suggestion or motivation for combining the Becker '331 patent with the Evans '986 patent as discussed above

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with regard to claim 1. Furthermore, according to the Office Action, the Becker '331 patent includes aligning a portion of the at least one alphanumeric locator with the scale of the template to accurately position the at least one alphanumeric locator. However, the Office Action goes on to state that the Becker '331 patent does not include a template having a scale. Accordingly, the Becker '331 patent cannot have the aligning element of this method claim as discussed above such that the combination set forth in the Office Action would not include all of the features of claim 38. Accordingly, claim 38 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 4, 15 and 26 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Becker '331 patent in view of the Evans '986 patent and U.S. Patent No. 5,918,398 to Stanley et al. The requirements for rejecting a claim under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) are outlined above. Claims 4, 15 and 26 depend from claims 1, 13 and 24, respectively. Since claims 1, 13 and 24 define patentable subject matter as discussed above, claims 4, 15 and 26 define patentable subject matter. Accordingly, claims 4, 15 and 26 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 12, 23, 35 and 37 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Becker '331 patent in view of the Evans '986 patent and U.S. Patent No. 3,956,838 to Gerrish. The requirements for making a prima facie case of obviousness are discussed above. Applicants respectfully assert that the Examiner has not met the Examiner's burden for establishing a prima facie case of obviousness with respect to the rejected claims. Consequently, the Examiner's rejection of the subject claims is inappropriate, and should be withdrawn. Claims 12, 23, 35 and 37 depend from claims 1, 13, 34 and 36, respectively. Since claims 1, 13, 34 and 36 define patentable subject matter as discussed above, claims 12, 23, 35 and 37 define patentable subject matter. Accordingly, claims 12, 23, 35 and 37 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 10, 11, 13, 21, 22, 24 and 32-50 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Stanley et al. '398 patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,315,387 to Heuser. The requirements for making a prima facie case of obviousness are described above. Applicants respectfully assert that the Examiner has not yet met the Examiner's burden of establishing a prima facie case of obviousness with respect to the

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rejected claims. Consequently, the Examiner's rejection of the subject claims is inappropriate, and should be withdrawn.

Claim 1 defines a sign system assembly as discussed above. Applicant respectfully submits that the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest all of the above noted features of claim 1. According to the Office Action, the Stanley et al. '398 patent includes:

at least one alpha numeric locator (22) configured to fit within the opening of the template and be properly located and positioned by aligning a portion of the at least one alphanumeric locator with the scale of the template (column 4, lines 1-25), and an alphanumeric symbol (22e) for each alphanumeric locator.

Applicant notes that the Stanley et al. '398 patent discloses that "the character subassemblies 22 each includes a character backing 22a adhesively mounting a character unit 22b thereon with a layer of releasable adhesive 22c" and that the "character units [22b] can be imprinted with suitable characters 22e." Lines 12-21 of column 4 of the Stanley et al. '398 patent. Accordingly, the element 22e is a portion of the element 22 in the Stanley et al. '398 patent such that the Office Action is difficult to understand as the Office Action purports these two elements to be separate elements. Nonetheless, according to the Office Action:

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the alphanumeric locator of Stanley et al. to include an aperture defining an alphanumeric symbol, as taught by Heuser, so that the user could further customize the assembly by removing the alphanumeric symbol.

Applicants submit that such a motivation was not a proper motivation for rejecting claim 1. The Heuser '387 patent discloses the use of labels with aligning means such that label item 6 can be properly applied to an object 11. However, the Heuser '387 patent does not disclose not using the label item 6. Accordingly, the Heuser '387 patent does not teach removing alphanumeric symbols. Furthermore, Applicant submits that removing alphanumeric symbols from the Stanley et al. '398 patent would not allow the custom display system to be further customized as such a system does not need the alphanumeric symbols in the first place.

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Accordingly, Applicants submit that there is no suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to combine the reference teachings. Accordingly, claim 1 is in condition for allowance.

In regard to the third criterion of obviousness, even if there was a suggestion or motivation for combining the Stanley et al. '398 patent with the Heuser '387 patent, any such combination would not include all of the claim limitations. First, according to the Office Action, the Stanley et al. '398 patent includes a template 18 having an opening therethrough, wherein the opening is at 20. However, according to the Stanley et al. '398 patent, the element 18 is a display base and the element 20 is a grid. The display base 18 is not disclosed as having any opening and the grid 20 is not an opening. The grid is printed on the display base 18. See line 1 of column 4 of the Stanley et al. '398 patent. Accordingly, the Stanley et al. '398 patent does not disclose or suggest at least one alphanumeric locator configured to fit within an opening of a template. Finally, according to the combination as set forth in the Office Action, the resulting combination would remove an alphanumeric symbol. Accordingly, the combination as set forth in the Office Action does not include an alphanumeric symbol. Therefore, claim 1 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 10, 11, 39 and 40 depend from claim 1, and since claim 1 defines unobvious patentable subject matter as discussed above, claims 10, 11, 39 and 40 define patentable subject matter. Furthermore, in regard to claim 10, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest a panel comprising an outer margin, a template and a guide, wherein the template is removably connected to the outer margin and the guide is removably connected to the template. According to the Office Action, the Stanley '398 patent discloses a panel 14 comprising an outer margin, the template and a guide 20. However, according to the Stanley et al. '398 patent, the custom display system includes a sheet 14 having a display base 18 and a grid 20 printed on the display base 18. Furthermore, according to the Office Action, the Stanley et al. '398 patent includes the template 18 having an opening therethrough 20. Since, according to the Office Action, the template 18 and everything therein is integral with 18 as illustrated in Fig. 3, the Stanley et al. '398 patent cannot disclose a guide that is separate from the elements already identified by the Examiner to reject claim 1. Furthermore, the Stanley et al. '398

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patent does not disclose any guide that is removably connected to a template. Moreover, in regard to claim 11, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest that the panel includes first perforations defining a first interface between an outer margin and a template and second perforations defining a second interface between a template and a guide, with the second perforations defining the opening in the template whereby the opening is formed by removing the guide. As discussed above, the display base 18 does not have any opening as the grid 20 is just printed on the display base 18. Accordingly, the Stanley et al. '398 patent does not disclose any second perforations defining a second interface between a template and a guide. Furthermore, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest the above noted features of claim 39. Specifically, since the combination as set forth in the Office Action does not include a template having an opening, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest at least two alphanumeric locators configured to fit within an opening of a template. Moreover, in regard to claim 40, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest at least one alphanumeric locator that can slide within an opening of a template. Since the prior art of record does not disclose an opening in a template as discussed above, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest at least one alphanumeric locator that can slide within an opening of a template. Accordingly, claims 10, 11, 39 and 40 are in condition for allowance.

Claim 13 defines a sign making system assembly as discussed above. Applicant respectfully submits that the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest all of the above noted features of claim 13. According to the Office Action, the Stanley et al. '398 patent includes:

at least one alpha numeric locator (22) configured to fit within the opening of the template and be properly located and positioned by aligning a portion of the at least one alphanumeric locator with the scale of the template (column 4, lines 1-25), and an alphanumeric symbol (22e) for each alphanumeric locator.

Applicant notes that the Stanley et al. '398 patent discloses that "the character subassemblies 22 each includes a character backing 22a adhesively mounting a character unit 22b thereon with a layer of releasable adhesive 22c" and that the "character units [22b] can be imprinted with suitable characters 22e." Lines 12-21 of column 4 of the Stanley et al. '398 patent.

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Accordingly, the element 22e is a portion of the element 22 in the Stanley et al. '398 patent such that the Office Action is difficult to understand as the Office Action purports these two elements to be separate elements. Nonetheless, according to the Office Action:

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the alphanumeric locator of Stanley et al. to include an aperture defining an alphanumeric symbol, as taught by Heuser, so that the user could further customize the assembly by removing the alphanumeric symbol.

Applicants submit that such a motivation was not a proper motivation for rejecting claim 13. The Heuser '387 patent discloses the use of labels with aligning means such that label item 6 can be properly applied to an object 11. However, the Heuser '387 patent does not disclose not using the label item 6. Accordingly, the Heuser '387 patent does not teach removing alphanumeric symbols. Furthermore, Applicant submits that removing alphanumeric symbols from the Stanley et al. '398 patent would not allow the custom display system to be further customized as such a system does not need the alphanumeric symbols in the first place. Accordingly, Applicants submit that there is no suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to combine the reference teachings. Accordingly, claim 13 is in condition for allowance.

In regard to the third criterion of obviousness, even if there was a suggestion or motivation for combining the Stanley et al. '398 patent with the Heuser '387 patent, any such combination would not include all of the claim limitations. First, according to the Office Action, the Stanley et al. '398 patent includes a template 18 having an opening therethrough, wherein the opening is at 20. However, according to the Stanley et al. '398 patent, the element 18 is a display base and the element 20 is a grid. The display base 18 is not disclosed as having any opening and the grid 20 is not an opening. The grid is printed on the display base 18. See line 1 of column 4 of the Stanley et al. '398 patent. Accordingly, the Stanley et al. '398 patent does not disclose or suggest at least one alphanumeric locator configured to fit within an opening of a template. Finally, according to the combination as set forth in the Office Action, the resulting combination would remove an alphanumeric symbol. Accordingly,

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the combination as set forth in the Office Action does not include an alphanumeric symbol. Therefore, claim 13 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 21, 22, 41 and 42 depend from claim 13, and since claim 13 defines unobvious patentable subject matter as discussed above, claims 21, 22, 41 and 42 define patentable subject matter. Furthermore, in regard to claim 21, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest a panel comprising an outer margin, a template and a guide, wherein the template is removably connected to the outer margin and the guide is removably connected to the template. According to the Office Action, the Stanley '398 patent discloses a panel 14 comprising an outer margin, the template and a guide 20. According to the Stanley et al. '398 patent, the custom display system includes a bay sheet 14 having a display base 18 and a grid 20 printed on the display base 18. Furthermore, according to the Office Action, the Stanley et al. '398 patent includes the template 18 having an opening therethrough 20. Since, according to the Office Action, the template 18 and everything therein is integral with 18 as illustrated in Fig. 3, the Stanley et al. '398 patent cannot disclose a guide that is separate from the elements already identified by the Examiner to reject claim 13. Furthermore, the Stanley et al. '398 patent does not disclose any guide that is removably connected to a template. Moreover, in regard to claim 22, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest that the panel includes first perforations defining a first interface between an outer margin and a template and second perforations defining a second interface between a template and a guide, with the second perforations defining the opening in the template whereby the opening is formed by removing the guide. As discussed above, the display base 18 does not have any opening as the grid 20 is just printed on the display base 18. Accordingly, the Stanley et al. '398 patent does not disclose any second perforations defining a second interface between a template and a guide. Furthermore, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest the above noted features of claim 41. Specifically, since the combination as set forth in the Office Action does not include a template having an opening, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest at least two alphanumeric locators configured to fit within an opening of a template. Moreover, in regard to claim 42, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest at least one alphanumeric locator that can slide within an opening of a template. Since the prior art of record does not

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disclose an opening in a template as discussed above, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest at least one alphanumeric locator that can slide within an opening of a template. Accordingly, claims 21, 22, 41 and 42 are in condition for allowance.

Claim 24 defines a sign making system assembly as discussed above. Applicant respectfully submits that the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest all of the above noted features of claim 24. According to the Office Action, the Stanley et al. '398 patent includes:

At least one alpha numeric locator (22) configured to fit within the opening of the template and be properly located and positioned by aligning a portion of the at least one alphanumeric locator with the scale of the template (column 4, lines 1-25), and an alphanumeric symbol (22e) for each alphanumeric locator.

Applicant notes that the Stanley et al. '398 patent discloses that "the character subassemblies 22 each includes a character backing 22a adhesively mounting a character unit 22b thereon with a layer of releasable adhesive 22c" and that the "character units [22b] can be imprinted with suitable characters 22e." Lines 12-21 of column 4 of the Stanley et al. '398 patent. Accordingly, the element 22e is a portion of the element 22 in the Stanley et al. '398 patent such that the Office Action is difficult to understand as the Office Action purports these two elements to be separate elements. Nonetheless, according to the Office Action:

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the alphanumeric locator of Stanley et al. to include an aperture defining an alphanumeric symbol, as taught by Heuser, so that the user could further customize the assembly by removing the alphanumeric symbol.

Applicants submit that such a motivation was not a proper motivation for rejecting claim 24. The Heuser '387 patent discloses the use of labels with aligning means such that label item 6 can be properly applied to an object 11. However, the Heuser '387 patent does not disclose not using the label item 6. Accordingly, the Heuser '387 patent does not teach removing alphanumeric symbols. Furthermore, Applicant submits that removing alphanumeric symbols

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from the Stanley et al. '398 patent would not allow the custom display system to be further customized as such a system does not need the alphanumeric symbols in the first place. Accordingly, Applicants submit that there is no suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to combine the reference teachings. Accordingly, claim 24 is in condition for allowance.

In regard to the third criterion of obviousness, even if there was a suggestion or motivation for combining the Stanley et al. '398 patent with the Heuser '387 patent, any such combination would not include all of the claim limitations. First, according to the Office Action, the Stanley et al. '398 patent includes a template 18 having an opening therethrough, wherein the opening is at 20. However, according to the Stanley et al. '398 patent, the element 18 is a display base and the element 20 is a grid. The display base 18 is not disclosed as having any opening and the grid 20 is not an opening, the grid is printed on the display base 18. See line 1 of column 4 of the Stanley et al. '398 patent. Accordingly, the Stanley et al. '398 patent does not disclose or suggest at least one alphanumeric locator configured to fit within an opening of a template. Finally, according to the combination as set forth in the Office Action, the resulting combination would remove an alphanumeric symbol. Accordingly, the combination as set forth in the Office Action does not include an alphanumeric symbol. Therefore, claim 24 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 32, 33, 43 and 44 depend from claim 24, and since claim 24 defines unobvious patentable subject matter as discussed above, claims 32, 33, 43 and 44 define patentable subject matter. Furthermore, in regard to claim 32, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest a panel comprising an outer margin, a template and a guide, wherein the template is removably connected to the outer margin and the guide is removably connected to the template. According to the Office Action, the Stanley '398 patent discloses a panel 14 comprising an outer margin, the template and a guide 20. According to the Stanley et al. '398 patent, the custom display system includes a bay sheet 14 having a display base 18 and a grid 20 printed on the display base 18. Furthermore, according to the Office Action, the Stanley et al. '398 patent includes the template 18 having an opening therethrough 20. Since, according to the Office Action, the template 18 and everything therein is integral with 18 as illustrated in Fig.

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3, the Stanley et al. '398 patent cannot disclose a guide that is separate from the elements already identified by the Examiner to reject claim 24. Furthermore, the Stanley et al. '398 patent does not disclose any guide that is removably connected to a template. Moreover, in regard to claim 33, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest that the panel includes first perforations defining a first interface between an outer margin and a template and second perforations defining a second interface between a template and a guide, with the second perforations defining the opening in the template whereby the opening is formed by removing the guide. As discussed above, the display base 18 does not have any opening as the grid 20 is just printed on the display base 18. Accordingly, the Stanley et al. '398 patent does not disclose any second perforations defining a second interface between a template and a guide. Furthermore, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest the above noted features of claim 43. Specifically, since the combination as set forth in the Office Action does not include a template having an opening, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest at least two alphanumeric locators configured to fit within an opening of a template. Moreover, in regard to claim 44, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest at least one alphanumeric locator that can slide within an opening of a template. Since the prior art of record does not disclose an opening in a template as discussed above, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest at least one alphanumeric locator that can slide within an opening of a template. Accordingly, claims 32, 33, 43 and 44 are in condition for allowance.

Claim 34 defines a method of accurately making a sign as discussed above. Applicant respectfully submits that the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest all of the above noted features of claim 34. According to the Office Action, the Stanley et al. '398 patent includes:

At least one alpha numeric locator (22) configured to fit within the opening of the template and be properly located and positioned by aligning a portion of the at least one alphanumeric locator with the scale of the template (column 4, lines 1-25), and an alphanumeric symbol (22e) for each alphanumeric locator.

Applicant notes that the Stanley et al. '398 patent discloses that "the character subassemblies 22 each includes a character backing 22a adhesively mounting a character unit 22b thereon

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with a layer of releasable adhesive 22c" and that the "character units [22b] can be imprinted with suitable characters 22e." Lines 12-21 of column 4 of the Stanley et al. '398 patent. Accordingly, the element 22e is a portion of the element 22 in the Stanley et al. '398 patent such that the Office Action is difficult to understand as the Office Action purports these two elements to be separate elements. Nonetheless, according to the Office Action:

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the alphanumeric locator of Stanley et al. to include an aperture defining an alphanumeric symbol, as taught by Heuser, so that the user could further customize the assembly by removing the alphanumeric symbol.

Applicants submit that such a motivation was not a proper motivation for rejecting claim 34. The Heuser '387 patent discloses the use of labels with aligning means such that label item 6 can be properly applied to an object 11. However, the Heuser '387 patent does not disclose not using the label item 6. Accordingly, the Heuser '387 patent does not teach removing alphanumeric symbols. Furthermore, Applicant submits that removing alphanumeric symbols from the Stanley et al. '398 patent would not allow the custom display system to be further customized as such a system does not need the alphanumeric symbols in the first place. Accordingly, Applicants submit that there is no suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to combine the reference teachings. Accordingly, claim 34 is in condition for allowance.

In regard to the third criterion of obviousness, even if there was a suggestion or motivation for combining the Stanley et al. '398 patent with the Heuser '387 patent, any such combination would not include all of the claim limitations. First, according to the Office Action, the Stanley et al. '398 patent includes a template 18 having an opening therethrough, wherein the opening is at 20. However, according to the Stanley et al. '398 patent, the element 18 is a display base and the element 20 is a grid. The display base 18 is not disclosed as having any opening and the grid 20 is not an opening, the grid is printed on the display base 18. See line 1 of column 4 of the Stanley et al. '398 patent. Accordingly, the Stanley et al. '398 patent does not disclose or suggest locating at least one alphanumeric locator within an

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opening of a template. Finally, according to the combination as set forth in the Office Action, the resulting combination would remove an alphanumeric symbol. Accordingly, the combination as set forth in the Office Action does not include an alphanumeric symbol. Therefore, claim 34 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 35, 45 and 46 depend from claim 34, and since claim 34 defines unobvious patentable subject matter as discussed above, claims 10, 11, 39 and 40 define patentable subject matter. Furthermore, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest the above noted features of claim 45. Specifically, since the combination as set forth in the Office Action does not include a template having an opening, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest locating at least two alphanumeric locators within an opening of a template. Moreover, in regard to claim 46, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest sliding the at least one alphanumeric locator within an opening of a template. Since the prior art of record does not disclose an opening in a template as discussed above, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest sliding at least one alphanumeric locator within an opening of a template. Accordingly, claims 35, 45 and 46 are in condition for allowance.

Claim 36 defines a method as discussed above. Applicant respectfully submits that the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest all of the above noted features of claim 36. According to the Office Action, the Stanley et al. '398 patent includes:

at least one alpha numeric locator (22) configured to fit within the opening of the template and be properly located and positioned by aligning a portion of the at least one alphanumeric locator with the scale of the template (column 4, lines 1-25), and an alphanumeric symbol (22e) for each alphanumeric locator.

Applicant notes that the Stanley et al. '398 patent discloses that "the character subassemblies 22 each includes a character backing 22a adhesively mounting a character unit 22b thereon with a layer of releasable adhesive 22c" and that the "character units [22b] can be imprinted with suitable characters 22e." Lines 12-21 of column 4 of the Stanley et al. '398 patent. Accordingly, the element 22e is a portion of the element 22 in the Stanley et al. '398 patent such that the Office Action is difficult to understand as the Office Action purports these two elements to be separate elements. Nonetheless, according to the Office Action:

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It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the alphanumeric locator of Stanley et al. to include an aperture defining an alphanumeric symbol, as taught by Heuser, so that the user could further customize the assembly by removing the alphanumeric symbol.

Applicants submit that such a motivation was not a proper motivation for rejecting claim 36. The Heuser '387 patent discloses the use of labels with aligning means such that label item 6 can be properly applied to an object 11. However, the Heuser '387 patent does not disclose not using the label item 6. Accordingly, the Heuser '387 patent does not teach removing alphanumeric symbols. Furthermore, Applicant submits that removing alphanumeric symbols from the Stanley et al. '398 patent would not allow the custom display system to be further customized as such a system does not need the alphanumeric symbols in the first place. Accordingly, Applicants submit that there is no suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to combine the reference teachings. Accordingly, claim 36 is in condition for allowance.

In regard to the third criterion of obviousness, even if there was a suggestion or motivation for combining the Stanley et al. '398 patent with the Heuser '387 patent, any such combination would not include all of the claim limitations. First, according to the Office Action, the Stanley et al. '398 patent includes a template 18 having an opening therethrough, wherein the opening is at 20. However, according to the Stanley et al. '398 patent, the element 18 is a display base and the element 20 is a grid. The display base 18 is not disclosed as having any opening and the grid 20 is not an opening, the grid is printed on the display base 18. See line 1 of column 4 of the Stanley et al. '398 patent. Accordingly, the Stanley et al. '398 patent does not disclose or suggest locating at least one alphanumeric locator within an opening of a template. Finally, according to the combination as set forth in the Office Action, the resulting combination would remove an alphanumeric symbol. Accordingly, the combination as set forth in the Office Action does not include an alphanumeric symbol. Therefore, claim 36 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 37, 47 and 48 depend from claim 36, and since claim 36 defines unobvious patentable subject matter as discussed above, claims 37, 47 and 48 define patentable subject

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matter. Furthermore, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest the above noted features of claim 47. Specifically, since the combination as set forth in the Office Action does not include a template having an opening, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest locating at least two alphanumeric locators within an opening of a template. Moreover, in regard to claim 48, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest sliding at least one alphanumeric locator within an opening of a template. Since the prior art of record does not disclose an opening in a template as discussed above, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest sliding at least one alphanumeric locator within an opening of a template.

Accordingly, claims 37, 47 and 48 are in condition for allowance.

Claim 38 defines a method as discussed above. Applicant respectfully submits that the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest all of the above noted features of claim 38.

According to the Office Action, the Stanley et al. '398 patent includes:

at least one alpha numeric locator (22) configured to fit within the opening of the template and be properly located and positioned by aligning a portion of the at least one alphanumeric locator with the scale of the template (column 4, lines 1-25), and an alphanumeric symbol (22e) for each alphanumeric locator.

Applicant notes that the Stanley et al. '398 patent discloses that "the character subassemblies 22 each includes a character backing 22a adhesively mounting a character unit 22b thereon with a layer of releasable adhesive 22c" and that the "character units [22b] can be imprinted with suitable characters 22e." Lines 12-21 of column 4 of the Stanley et al. '398 patent. Accordingly, the element 22e is a portion of the element 22 in the Stanley et al. '398 patent such that the Office Action is difficult to understand as the Office Action purports these two elements to be separate elements. Nonetheless, according to the Office Action:

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the alphanumeric locator of Stanley et al. to include an aperture defining an alphanumeric symbol, as taught by Heuser, so that the user could further customize the assembly by removing the alphanumeric symbol.

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Applicants submit that such a motivation was not a proper motivation for rejecting claim 38. The Heuser '387 patent discloses the use of labels with aligning means such that label item 6 can be properly applied to an object 11. However, the Heuser '387 patent does not disclose not using the label item 6. Accordingly, the Heuser '387 patent does not teach removing alphanumeric symbols. Furthermore, Applicant submits that removing alphanumeric symbols from the Stanley et al. '398 patent would not allow the custom display system to be further customized as such a system does not need the alphanumeric symbols in the first place. Accordingly, Applicants submit that there is no suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to combine the reference teachings. Accordingly, claim 38 is in condition for allowance.

In regard to the third criterion of obviousness, even if there was a suggestion or motivation for combining the Stanley et al. '398 patent with the Heuser '387 patent, any such combination would not include all of the claim limitations. First, according to the Office Action, the Stanley et al. '398 patent includes a template 18 having an opening therethrough, wherein the opening is at 20. However, according to the Stanley et al. '398 patent, the element 18 is a display base and the element 20 is a grid. The display base 18 is not disclosed as having any opening and the grid 20 is not an opening, the grid is printed on the display base 18. See line 1 of column 4 of the Stanley et al. '398 patent. Accordingly, the Stanley et al. '398 patent does not disclose or suggest locating at least one alphanumeric locator within an opening of a template. Finally, according to the combination as set forth in the Office Action, the resulting combination would remove an alphanumeric symbol. Accordingly, the combination as set forth in the Office Action does not include an alphanumeric symbol. Therefore, claim 38 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 49 and 50 depend from claim 38, and since claim 38 defines unobvious patentable subject matter as discussed above, claims 49 and 50 define patentable subject matter. Furthermore, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest the above noted features of claim 49. Specifically, since the combination as set forth in the Office Action does not include a template having an opening, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest locating at least two alphanumeric locators within an opening of a template. Moreover, in

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regard to claim 50, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest sliding at least one alphanumeric locator within an opening of a template. Since the prior art of record does not disclose an opening in a template as discussed above, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest sliding at least one alphanumeric locator within an opening of a template.

Accordingly, claims 49 and 50 are in condition for allowance.

All pending claims 1-50 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowability is therefore earnestly solicited.

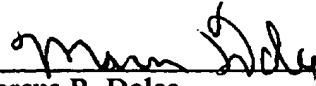
Respectfully submitted,

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